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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on
the massacre of civilians in Mexico**

The Presidency of the European Union condemns in the strongest terms the massacre perpetrated by paramilitary groups against Tzotzil Indians on 23 December 1997 in the Mexican State of Chiapas, causing the death of 46 civilians.

It calls on the Government of the United States of Mexico to carry out an enquiry without delay to ascertain the full details regarding the massacre and to ensure that the perpetrators are brought to justice. It has noted the undertaking given to this effect by President Zedillo and trusts that it will be carried out.

The Presidency of the European Union expresses its concern regarding the human rights situation in this region of Mexico.

It calls on the Mexican authorities to take all the measures necessary to guarantee the safety of the civilian population in the State of Chiapas.

It would point out in this context that the European Union and the United States of Mexico have recently signed a cooperation agreement in which the two parties undertake unreservedly to respect democratic principles and fundamental human rights and the principles of the rule of law.